

Dear [Pastor]
cc: [the church secretary]

I am writing briefly to draw attention to a matter that I noted in Mr *****'s message last Sunday, w.r.t. Acts 8:26-40, in particular Acts 8:37.

I appreciate that in a sense, the matter is water under the bridge now but hopefully the brief points that follow will be considered should the above Acts passage, in particular Acts 8:37, be addressed in any future ministry of the church.

Mr ***** made reference to Acts 8:37 as not being in the oldest manuscripts and not part of 'the original' or words to that effect.

Had he limited his comments to the above statement, I would not have raised this matter. Any speaker can give an incorrect report, depending on the sources he consults. It's happened to me. The simple truth is that Acts 8:37 is scripture, with an unbroken testimony to its validity from the 2nd century AD onwards and God's blessing of Reformation and Revival on the Bibles that contain it, e.g. all those of the 16th century English Protestant Reformation. Even the versions that omit it imply the validity of Acts 8:37, because they don't change the verse numbering system, although it would obviously be very easy to do so in this particular instance, if their editors genuinely believed that Acts 8:37 is spurious*.

*Various objections to Acts 8:37 have been raised. I believe that it is possible to answer them all satisfactorily.

What was real cause for concern to me (and hence this note) was the statement in the message to the effect that the passage loses nothing if Acts 8:37 is cut out because the Ethiopian clearly believed and was saved.

On the contrary, the passage loses everything with respect to Christian salvation if Acts 8:37 is lost.

Significantly, the word "believed" is lost. Without Acts 8:37, it can only be inferred that the individual "believed" anything with respect to salvation (apart from the supposed need for baptism – see comments that follow). It can equally be inferred that belief in the Lord Jesus Christ is not necessary for salvation.

Needless to say, that is a most serious error but it is a possible error if Acts 8:37 is cut out of the account.

Equally significantly, it is known why Acts 8:37 is missing from most Greek manuscripts, including the Catholic manuscripts alluded to but not identified on pages 1024, 1073 of the church bibles.

Acts 8:37 was dropped from successive copies of Greek manuscripts by the monkish forbears of those who are now Greek Orthodox priests (as well as by the Catholic forbears),

such that it is now omitted by most extant Greek manuscripts, for the majority of which the Greek Orthodox Church is the custodian, notably at St Catherine's Monastery at the foot of Mt. Sinai.

The reason is that the Greek Orthodox Church teaches that only baptism and communion are necessary for salvation, not belief on the Lord Jesus Christ. Omission of Acts 8:37 provides this church with the necessary justification for this false teaching (as with the Catholic Church, its members don't readily "Search the scriptures" John 5:39). Once this false teaching is established, it becomes straightforward to impose infant baptism.

The Greek Orthodox manner of infant baptism is even more heinous than that of the Catholic Church. I think it amounts to ritualistic satanic child abuse. It is likely that the young women in the church who work with children would be moved to tears if they knew the details.

All of this is written up in the book Hazardous Materials, by Gail Riplinger, pp 745ff, ISBN 978-0-9794117-6-2.

I fully appreciate that no-one in the church is likely to be led astray by the false doctrines of infant baptism and baptism as part of salvation but, as indicated, I think that it is useful for the church to be informed of the underlying issues.

Yours in the Lord Jesus Christ
Alan O'R